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SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS
NSC FOR JWOOD
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SUBJECT: DECLARED AND LIKELY AFGHAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

REF: KABUL 1440

¶1. (SBU) Provided below, for addressees reference, is an update to reftel from June on declared and likely presidential candidates, with ethnicity in parentheses. Addressees should take care when dealing with those listed not to convey the misimpression of USG endorsement of a particular candidacy.

¶2. (SBU) This list is not exhaustive and is subject to change. Many rumored candidates have talked up their candidacies for self-promotional motives and may not intend to run for elective office. Declared candidates are those who have made repeated, public statements regarding their intentions. With no set election date, we do not yet know when the official filing period will begin. Likely candidates are those Embassy believes are considering a run or who may be asked by political parties and factions to run as their candidate. We list the candidates here recognizing some have very little, if any, base of support and would receive only a small fraction of the vote if they were to run.

¶3. (SBU) Declared presidential candidates:

- President Karzai (Pashtun)
- Ramazan Bashardost, Lower House MP (Hazara)
- Abdul Qader Imami Ghorl, Lower House MP (Tajik)
- Abdul Jabar Sabit, former attorney general (Pashtun)

¶4. (SBU) Likely or rumored presidential candidates:

- Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, former Foreign Minister (Tajik/Pashtun)
- Anwarulhaq Ahadi, Finance Minister who may resign (Pashtun)
- Edayat Amin Arsallah, senior minister in Cabinet (Pashtun)
- Engineer Ehsanullah Bayat, businessman and philanthropist (Pashtun)
- Pir Gailani, head of religiously influential family (Pashtun)
- Ashraf Ghani, former Finance Minister (Pashtun)
- Masooda Jalal, only female candidate in 2004 election (Tajik)
- Ali Ahmad Jalali, former Interior Minister (Pashtun)
- Ahmad Zia Massoud, First Vice President (Tajik)
- Ustad Mutasem Bellah Mazhabi, moderate religious scholar (Pashtun)
- Prof. Abdul Rassoul Amin, former Education Minister (Pashtun)
- Prince Ali Seraj, nephew of the late king (Pashtun)
- Gul Aqa Sherzai, Nangarhar Governor (Pashtun)
- Mohammad Dawood Sultanzoi, Lower House MP (Pashtun)

15. (SBU) Persons once thought likely to be candidates, now unlikely to run:

- Mohammad Hanif Atmar, Interior Minister (Pashtun)
 - Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum (Uzbek)
 - Haji Mohammad Mohaqqueq, Lower House MP (Hazara)
 - Yunus Qanooni, Speaker of the Lower House (Tajik)
 - Prof. Burhanuddin Rabbani, Lower House MP and former president (Tajik)
 - Mustapha Zahir Shah, grandson of the late king (Pashtun)
- DELL